



**Flint Hills Regional Council Board of Directors  
Meeting Minutes of October 18, 2013**

**Flint Hills Regional Council Board of Directors  
Board Meeting Minutes – October 18, 2013  
Life's Finer Moments  
Clay Center, KS 67432**

Present from Board of the Regional Council: **John Armbrust**, Governor's Military Council; **Cecil Aska**, Junction City Mayor; **Ben Bennett**, Geary County Commissioner; **Robert Boyd**, Riley County Commissioner; **Dan Deiter**, Alma City Councilman; **Vic Enns**, Wamego City Commissioner; **Vern Hay**, Morris County Commissioner; **Linda Hoeffner**, Fort Riley; **Ronald Kabat** (*for Phil Weishaar*), City of Chapman Commissioner; **Joe Kormanik**, Alta Vista Commissioner; **MarySue Roller**, City of Woodbine Mayor; **Debi Schwerdtfeger**, Council Grove Councilwoman; **Jimmy Thatcher**, Clay Center Mayor.

Absent from the Board: **Honey Grant**, Grandview Plaza Vice-Mayor; **Stan Hartwich**, Pottawatomie County Commissioner; **Rich Jankovich**, Manhattan City Commissioner; **Galen Johnson**, Dwight City Mayor; **Keith Kahnt**, White City Councilman; **John Ray**, Abilene City Commissioner; **David Shover II**, Riley City Mayor; **Megan Umscheid**, Kansas State University.

Present from the Greater Regional Council Membership: *No additional members present.*

Present from Staff Support: **William J. Clark**, Executive Director; **Unique Hiram M.S.**, Administrative Manager; **Jeff Adams PhD**, Regional Planner; **Stephanie Watts**, Transportation Planner; and **Gary Stith AICP**, Assistant Planner.

Guests: **Barb Downey**, FHWRC Welcome Center Committee; **Ron Fehr**, City Manager for Manhattan; **Bruce McMillan**, CEDS Chair; **Robert Reece**, Pottawatomie County City Manager; **Kerry Rozman**, Clay Center City Clerk; **Angela Schwerdtfeger**, Council Grove TCT PR Director; **Gerald Smith**, City Manager for Junction City; **Monty Wedel**, Riley County Planning Director; and **David Yearout**, Junction City/Geary County Director of Planning & Zoning.

**WELCOME:**

- William J. Clark, FHRC Executive Director, started the meeting at 9:09 a.m. Ben Bennett, FHRC President, arrived at 9:12 a.m. and took over the presiding duties of the meeting.
- Gerald C. Smith, City Manager for Junction City, formally introduced himself and gave a brief background of his career.

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**APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING'S MINUTES:**

- Member Vern Hay motioned for the September 27, 2013 meeting minutes to be approved with no corrections. Member Cecil Aska seconded. The vote was carried unanimously.

**DIRECTOR'S TOP 10:**

- FHRC Sustainability – OEA Grant does not look favorably; it was noted that John Armbrust (Governor's Military Council) would reengage OEA with conversations about the potential grant funding.
- Flint Hills Frontiers Project – Shelley Carver has been hired as the new Community Liaison and will begin employment with the organization on November 4, 2013. Currently finalizing a plan to go out to six different communities (workgroups).
- Flint Hills Economic Development District – Gary Stith is the project manager for the FHEDD and there are a number of projects moving forward. Once the FHEDD is officially set up then the entity will be able to apply for \$60K in grant funding.
- Strategic Communications – The organizational strategic communications goal is to educate the public about the FHRC. There will be a plan put together that will consist of getting the word out via radio, social media and newspaper outlets. Shelley Carver will be the head of the social community engagement.
- 2014 FHRC Budget – 53% of the HUD Grant has been expended to date. The Executive Director is looking at asking for a no-cost extension of the grant funding due to the office flood and government shutdown. 10% (\$200K) of the funding can be moved without permission from the grantor among authorized categories. It has
- Expansion of FHRC Membership – Chase and Lyon counties and City of Emporia
- MPO/TDM – Stephanie Watts will update the FHRC Board with a PowerPoint presentation later on in the meeting.
- Changes to the Articles of Incorporation/Bylaws – Revisions to both of these organizational documents will need to be made in order for the FHRC to be considered as the Fiscal Agent for the FTA Section 5307 Funds. There will be a vote on the resolution in today's board meeting.

**FHRC AUDIT REVIEW:**

- There were no significant findings in the audit review.
- The independent auditor, Melanie Tuttle, provided 13 different recommendations
  1. Employee Related Controls (7) – 4 implemented; 2 awaiting implementation
  2. Payroll Related Controls (3) – 2 already implemented; 1 awaiting implementation
  3. Compliance with Federal Grants – Need to adhere to operations manual

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**FLINT HILLS MPO UPDATE:**

- Stephanie Watts, Transportation Planner, presented a review and updates on the Flint Hills Metropolitan Planning Organization (FHMPO).
- In 2013, the State of Kansas received \$382M in federal funding; it is projected that the state will spend at least \$8M in each county over the next 10 years (\$4.3B in state funds).
- According to data from T-Works, Kansans drive approximately 80.8 million miles a day.
- The role of the FHRC is to serve as the regional forum for transportation planning.
- TIP – Transportation Improvement Program (\$44M programmed); MTP – Metropolitan Transportation Plan (TDM Tool – Long Range Plan); 2014 UPWP (\$160K from FHWA / FTA – requires 20% match). The three major activities for the FHMPO include the PPP (Public Participation Plan), TDM (Transportation Demand Model) & MTP (Metropolitan Transportation Plan).
- Public Participation Plan – Defines a process to provide interested parties a reasonable opportunity to be involved and is required by federal law.
- Metropolitan Transportation Plan – Covers a 25-year planning horizon; required to be updated every five years. The Travel Demand Model is an essential tool used in drafting this plan because it forecasts future congestions and improvements.
- Olsson Associates were hired as the TDM consulting firm and will begin work in December 2014. The negotiated contract totaled \$120K.
- Members can access additional information on the FHMPO website at [www.FlintHillsRegion.org/FHMPO](http://www.FlintHillsRegion.org/FHMPO)

**WELCOME CENTER:**

- Barb Downey, Flint Hills Regional Welcome Center Committee, gave a brief presentation on the proposed project.
- The two main goals of the Welcome Center are:
  - To raise awareness of the Flint Hills and its tourism offerings
  - Intercept the thousand of visitor traveling through the Flint Hills
- The core committee of this project consisted of Pottawatomie County, Riley County, Geary County, Wabaunsee County, Morris County and a representative from Fort Riley.
- Conceptual Site Design includes an entry road on the axis with tower that leads to a circular drop off and entrance plaza; covered fuel pump, public parking, flank entry road; and screened service drive that is well hidden from public view.
- The estimated increase in annual visits is 1,061,457 people with an increased tourism income of the following: Geary County 11.8% (\$8.6M), Morris County 8.8% (\$1.6M) and Pottawatomie County 9.9% (\$1.6 M).
- Some of the organizational possibilities include the incorporation of the FHRC offices and creation of a public/private partnership.

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- Funding possibilities for the project are economic development administration grant, transportation grant, commercial development, scenic by-ways and state funding.
- The BIG dream picture is the make this venue an economic destination, which would include hotels, fuel stop and regional businesses as well as tourism information.
- Member Vic Enns motioned for the Flint Hills Welcome Center conversation to be postponed for 30 days. Member Dan Deiter seconded. The vote was carried unanimously.
- No additional staff time will be utilized for further research and data gathering unless the board decides to make this request at the meeting in November.
- Staff needs to determine if the City of Manhattan will continue to pay the lease on the land if the FHRC supports this project. Information will be due at the November 15<sup>th</sup> board meeting.

**COUNTY/CITY UPDATES:**

- CLAY CENTER

**Community Highlights/Projects:**

- \$862K on street construction
- Passed tax for funding of the new community pool
- Working with KDHE for new belt press which is a \$1M-\$2M project
- Remarketing runway at airport
- Nine acres of industrial park (working on an economic development grant to get a gravity sewer)
- Working with Morganville to run water main to city
- \$14M upgrade to electrical system for TransCanada Pipeline that would be located four miles from the city center

**FHRC Assistance Required:**

- Need permits completed and information sharing on water/power capabilities.

- WOODBINE

**Community Highlights/Projects:**

- Upgrade on city sewer system
- Repaying loans on water project
- The city currently rents a building that houses the community center/library. There is a mold issue, which has resulted in the task of locating a new building to house both entities.

**FHRC Assistance Required:**

- Project Funding Assistance
- Policy/Statue Assistance

- ABILENE

**Community Highlights/Projects:**

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- Undergoing downtown revitalization
- Revamping and updating city website

**FHRC Assistance Required:**

- Legislative advocacy, regional marketing, procurement / reciprocal contracts and regional roundtable discussions.

• CHAPMAN

**Community Highlights/Projects:**

- Updating equipment (i.e. selling and buying new police cars)
- Addition of a new commercial business entity, Cook's Corner
- Currently pursuing commercial investments within the city
- Long range power purchases through the Kansas Municipal Energy Agency (KMEA)

**FHRC Assistance Required:**

- Identifying and recognizing city strengths that will assist in economic advancement.
- Maintaining quality of life and keeping Chapman vibrant.

• JUNCTION CITY

**Community Highlights/Projects:**

- E-Street Project (link to I-70)
- Workforce development and utilization, which includes business recruitment

**FHRC Assistance Required:**

- Identifying grant opportunities and facilitation of information sharing among the regional communities.

• GRANDVIEW PLAZA

**Community Highlights/Projects:**

- Currently conducting a funding search for community life station
- Transferring from REA to WESTAR for electrical service
- New sewer lines and lagoon adjustments

**FHRC Assistance Required:**

- Locating sewer cameras to utilize for viewing problems areas in the system and analyzing electrical costs.

• GEARY COUNTY

**Community Highlights/Projects:**

- Concentration on economic development which includes industry, retail and infrastructure preparation
- Ridership has increased tremendously with the aTa bus service throughout the region

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- Road improvements are currently underway throughout the county that includes the “E” street project

**FHRC Assistance Required:**

- Identifying nested legislative issues, increased advocacy for the FHRC membership and progressive assistance with the 2013 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

**FORT RILEY / GMC / KSU UPDATES:**

- FORT RILEY - Linda Hoeffner, Fort Riley Deputy Garrison Commander
  - There are 16,000 soldiers currently on ground at Fort Riley
  - Civilians were only off for four days during the recent government shutdown; those employees will receive back pay
  - Approximately 22,000 soldiers are in AFGHAN while 672 soldiers are in AFRICOM
  - Security training will be conducted from 10/26/13 – 12/02/13; there will be 392 people will be participating in this training
  - There will be a job fair at Fort Riley on October 22 and 60 vendors will be available for attending participants
  - An education fair will be held on November 14 at the Riley Conference Center; 60 colleges will available at this event
  
- GOVERNOR’S MILITARY COUNCIL – John Armbrust, Executive Director
  - A level of uncertainty currently exists at the Department of Defense due to the continuing resolution
  - There is still no approved FY14 budget and the outlook is that funding will be excessively smaller; a total budget reduction of \$51B
  - Due to sequestration, there will be a downsizing of soldiers and the Army will be moving to 400-450K with a possible downsizing in the civilian workforce
  - Armbrust will be spending time at the Pentagon to gain general knowledge of where they are going in the future because of the budgetary constraints; also participating on a budget panel
  - Encouraged the communities to keep an eye on the unmanned vehicle discussions because the integration could lead to the possibility of workforce and economic growth
  
- KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY – Megan Umscheid, President’s Office (**Not in Attendance**)

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:**

- Legislative Concerns:
  - Trans Canada Pipeline – Member Jimmy Thatcher
  - “E” Street Project – Executive Director William J. Clark

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- Reduction in Mental Health Funding by the State – Member Vern Hay
- The FHRC has retained a legal firm and will not need to pay a retainer fee; the attorney’s name is Mark Edwards
- The 2014 Leader’s Retreat will be held on January 17 & 18 in Kansas City with an attendance/food cost of \$170.00. There will be a 10–15 presentations and breakout workgroups. The topics will include the following:
  - EDD – What does it take to be successful?
  - Industrial & Commerce Land Development
  - Regional Transportation
  - Workforce Availability – What skill sets in counties/cities?
  - Regional Branding
- Next month’s board meeting will be held in Pottawatomie County on November 15. There will be an FHEDD update, draft CEDS document, and draft resolutions for future signature. The representatives from Chase & Lyon counties will be extended an invitation to attend the meeting.
- There is a conflict between the January 2014 board meeting and Leadership Retreat dates which will need to be resolved at next month’s meeting
- David Yearout gave a brief overview about the Wakefield, KS meeting about Algae Problems at Milford Lake. The Total Maximum Daily Load (TDML) Study should be available on the KDHE website <http://www.kdheks.gov/>

**REVIEW DUE OUTS / TASKINGS:**

- Junction City/Manhattan – Public Participation Plan meetings will be scheduled with presentations given by William Clark and Stephanie Watts.
- KDOT Potential Cuts – The FHRC board members are invited to the Flint Hills Metropolitan Planning Organization (FHMPPO) Policy Board on November 20, 2013. This upcoming meeting will be held at the City of Manhattan Commission Room at 3:30 p.m.
- Exit 313 – Does the FHRC want to take over the lease? Would it be affordable?
- Work with communities to make a list of needs
- **ACTION ITEM (November 15):** 2014 FHRC Board Meeting Schedule
- **ACTION ITEM (November 15):** January 2014 FHRC Board Meeting
- **ACTION ITEM (November 15):** Vote on Welcome Center Participation Level
- **ACTION ITEM (November 15):** Discussion on proposed Legislative Topics

**CLOSE OUT:**

- FHRC President Ben Bennett adjourned meeting at 12:30 p.m.